

Right to Rent Guide

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What is a right to rent check?

Right to rent is a check that must be legally carried out by a landlord or property manager before the start of a new tenancy to ensure the tenant has a right to live in the UK.

Introduced by the Home Office in 2016 these checks aim to make it harder for people to illegally live and work in the UK.

Whose responsibility is it to carry out the check?

If you're a self-managed landlord then the right to rent check is your responsibility to undertake, however, if you use a property manager or agency to manage your portfolio this will often be carried out by them.

If you use a property management company it's important to check that this service is included in your package.



What's changed?

During Covid-19 the rules were adjusted by allowing tenants to show their ID by video call or by sharing a scanned document for manual checks.

In October 2022 these rules were revoked and now all right-to-rent checks must be carried out in one of three ways:

- Manually
- Home Office
- IDVT

Keep reading to learn more about each option and find one that suits you.



Three ways to acquire a right to rent check

1 Manual Check

Manual checks must be carried out either in person or via video call, however, if the check is done via video call you must have possession of the tenants original document (which can be sent via post).

During the check the following processes must take place:

- Check that the documents are genuine and haven't been tampered with
- The tenant is the rightful holder
- Check photographs and DOB are consistent with the appearance of the tenant



- Any differences in names can be supported with documentary evidence e.g. a marriage certificate or deed poll
- Immigration permission has not expired
- All documents must be copied and retained

2 Home Office Online Checking Service

If you would like to do the check virtually you can use the [Home Office online checking service](#).

The service supports a range of migrants, depending on the type of immigration document they have, however not all migrants can use the online service.

Since April 2022 everyone with a Biometric Residence Permit/Card must use the service.



To use this service the tenant must follow the instructions given and provide you with a 9-digit share code.

Once you have this code you are able to access the service and follow the instructions given.

Although this service is virtual you must check in person (or via video call) that the tenant is the person pictured in the online service.

To learn more visit: [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

3 IDVT

IDVT stands for Identity Verification Technology through an ISP (Identity Service Provider).

This check is virtual is only applicable for British or Irish passports - if your tenant does not have this documentation it must be checked manually or via the Home Office.

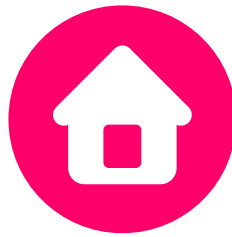


Satisfy yourself that the photograph and biographic details (for example, date of birth) on the output from the IDVT check are consistent with the individual presenting themselves for rent.

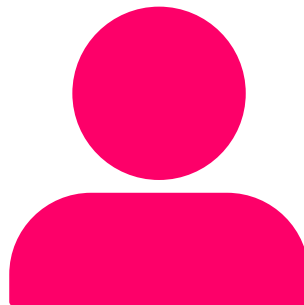
If you choose to use an IDSP you must retain a clear copy of the IDVT identity check output.



Manual



**Home
Office**



IDVT





Are there any exceptions?

There are exceptions when it comes to tenant checks. For example, you don't have to check tenants if you are providing accommodation for the following types of rental properties:

- Social housing
- Care homes
- Hospices
- Hospital
- Mobile homes
- Student accommodation

You do need to check tenants if you are providing, amongst others, the following type of rental accommodation:

- Is tied accommodation - meaning it's part of a job
- If the tenancy is 7 years or longer



What documents can be used?

Acceptable documents that a tenant can show their landlord or the property manager include:

- UK passport
- EU/EEA passport or identity card, permanent residence card
- Travel document showing indefinite leave to remain
- Visa if applicable
- Home Office immigration status document or a certificate of registration/naturalisation as a British citizen.





When should the check take place and do I need to do any follow-ups?

All right to rent checks must take place for every tenant before the tenancy starts.

Follow-up checks only need to take place should your tenant have a time limit on their right to stay in the UK.

If the tenant does have a time limit on their right to stay in the UK all follow-ups must take place just before the end of the 12-month period after your previous check and just before the end of your tenant's permission to stay in the UK comes to an end.



What to do if the check fails?

If your prospective tenant fails their right to rent check you are not legally able to offer them a tenancy.

If your current tenant fails a follow-up check you or your property manager must consult the Home Office for further instructions.

Could I be fined for not doing the check?

It's essential to carry out these checks. Landlords and agents who don't comply will be liable for fines up to £3,000.

Landlords and agents who fail to remove illegal migrants from their property could face imprisonment of up to five years.



Can someone help me with a right to rent check?

Right to rent checks with the Home Office are free of charge and all online, you can find out more information via the government website.

If you're a landlord who wants a property manager or agent to help with this check out our list of partners who can help you.

Key information

- All right to rent checks must take place for every tenant before the tenancy starts.



- Landlords and agents who do not carry out these checks or follow-ups can face fines of up to £3,000 and maximum imprisonment of five years.
- There are three ways to carry out a right to rent check - manually, via the Home Office service or using an IDSP.
- If you are using an agency to manage your properties they may do this for you, but remember to check.
- Documents must be retained and stored - this can be uploaded to your Habeo account.
- Check the tenant documents are not just genuine but also that they belong to them.



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